

Joint Meeting –

Harrisonburg Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Advisory Committee (HBPPAC) and Harrisonburg Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee

Meeting Summary

February 1, 2010 – 5:30pm-6:45pm

Attendance: Thanh Dang (Public Works), Drew Williams (Public Works), Adam Fletcher (Community Development), Thomas Jenkins (Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition), Paul Johnston (Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition), Lara Mack (New Community Project), Charlie Chenault (Planning Commission), Sgt. William Keller (Police), Officer Greg Deeds (Police), Lee Eschelman (James Madison University), Ben Wyse (Transit), Carol Hall (Thomas Harrison Middle School), David Ehrenpreis (citizen), Chris Hulleman (citizen), Bill Blessing (Transportation Safety Commission), Len Van Wyk (Transportation Safety Commission).

1. Welcome/ Introductions

2. Update - Railroad Crossing at S. Main St. & Country Club Rd.

Projects completed by City and Norfolk Southern Railroad. Engineers estimate \$87K. Funded by City's Bicycle Capital projects line item. There was some discussion about snow removal being needed at the crossings which extend beyond the street width, as well as snow removal on shared use paths such as Rockingham Drive Trail. Public Works staff is currently updating lists of sidewalk removal locations and will plan to add these locations.

3. Update – 5 new Bicycle Racks installed Downtown

Bicycle racks installed in Fall 2009 by Public Works staff. Bicycle racks were funded by remaining funds from City's Streetscape Phase I project.

4. Update – Storm Drainage Grates Improvements

Five storm grates have been replaced by a local machine shop and paid for by the City's Bicycle Capital Projects line item. Storm grates constructed out of steel for about \$4,500. (The original grates were made of iron and were cast at a foundry.) Locations of these replaced Priority 1 grates: S. Main St. @ E. Water St., S. Main St. @ Bank of America, Gay St. @ N. Liberty St, S. Liberty @ Bruce St (NW & SW corners).

Three (3) more grates are expected to be replaced by end of February. Locations: S. Mason @ E. Market St. by Wachovia, S. Liberty @ Bruce St. (NE corner), Bruce St. (Library/Verizon). It was noted that these grates were identified as Priority 1 by citizens after staff had identified and presented to City Council a list of priority storm grate locations.

A full listing of storm drainage grates to be replaced in the future can be found in the draft Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan at www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped . Priority 2 grates will be targeted for replacement over the next two years. These will be included in departmental budget requests over the upcoming two fiscal years. Priority 3 grates are recommended for replacement as part of a larger maintenance project (i.e. Streetscape, curb and gutter replacement, sidewalk replacement, paving, etc.).

5. Update – Port Republic Rd. Phase III

Port Republic Road Phase III from Neff Avenue to east city limits was completed in Fall 2009. This road improvement project included a sidewalk and shared use path that was funded by a Transportation Enhancement Grant.

VDOT's Port Republic Road project from east city limits to Boyers Road had funding approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The project will be starting soon and expected completion in 2012. Project will include a shared use path and sidewalks.

It was asked if there was adequate crossing from the south side of Port Republic Road, where the shared use path is, to the new hospital. Questions about the VDOT project should be directed to either Mr. Don Komara, Residency Administrator, or Mr. Jeremy Mason, Assistant Residency Administrator, for the VDOT Harrisonburg Residency. Phone: (540) 434-2586.

6. Update – Erickson Ave.-Stone Spring Rd. Phase II

Road improvement project extends from S. Main St. to east city limits and will include two bridges. One bridge over Blacks Run and a second bridge over I-81. The entire 3.1-mile length of Erickson Ave.-Stone Spring Rd. will include bicycle lanes in both directions and a sidewalk on one side.

It was noted that the Bluestone Trail (concept) will cross over Stone Spring Rd.

In September 2009, the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County partnered and submitted an application for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant. The \$70.1 million was requested to fund the nearly 6-mile road length between west city limits and Route 33 in Rockingham County. The City anticipates receiving notification from the US DOT later this month of February.

Go to www.ericksonstonespring.org for more information about the City's portion of the project and go to www.HarrisonburgVaTIGERGrant.org/ for information about the TIGER Grant application.

Update February 18, 2010: The City and County were notified by the US DOT that the TIGER Grant application for Erickson Ave.-Stone Spring Road was not awarded. No TIGER grant applications were funded in Virginia.

7. Harrisonburg Delegation to Davis, CA (Lara Mack and Tom Benevento)

Lara Mack and Tom Benevento of New Community Project shared with the group that the trip to Davis, CA is funded by community members, primarily the Voluntary Gas Tax Group, New Community Project,

the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, and the frequent flyer miles of a professor from Davis, CA who frequently visits Eastern Mennonite University. It was this professor who suggested that a delegation from Harrisonburg visit Davis, CA.

Ms. Mack noted that Davis, CA has been supporting bicycle infrastructure for over 40 years, and the purpose of the trip is for the Harrisonburg delegation to see what's in Davis that can be applied in Harrisonburg. The trip will take place March 4 through March 8 and the agenda and activities for the trip is still being developed. There is a possibility that the group may also visit Sacramento, CA and/or San Francisco, CA.

The following individuals make up the Harrisonburg Delegation: Mr. Kai Degner, city mayor; Mr. MuAwei Da'Mes, city planning commission; Ms. Thanh Dang, city public works planner; Thomas Jenkins, Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition; Ms. Lara Mack, New Community Project; and possibly someone from James Madison University. Ms. Mack noted that individuals from Davis, CA noted that university involvement and participation in bicycling and this trip is very important.

Update February 18, 2010: The following additional individuals will also be part of the delegation to Davis, CA: Tom Benevento, New Community Project and Paulette Moore, Eastern Mennonite University.

Mr. Reeves asked how the group planned to provide a report to the local citizenry. Suggested by committee members was a public meeting, letters to the Daily News-Record, presentation at the Healthy Community Council meetings, etc.

8. JMU Bicycle & Transportation Planning (Lee Eschelman, JMU)

Mr. Eschelman, Transportation Demand Manager at JMU, provided an update of some of the bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts taking place at James Madison University. He and other JMU staff eyeballed locations of where bike trails/routes could go along existing service roads, sidewalks, etc.

Mr. Eschelman has proposed the removal of the R-8 lot, on street parking, along Carrier Drive to paint bicycle lanes from where the existing bicycle lanes end on the I-81 bridge to Bluestone Drive. Bluestone Drive is on VDOT's schedule to be repaved in within the next year or so and it has been proposed that Carrier Drive be repaved (and bicycle lanes painted) at the same time. However, with large truck traffic traveling to Bridgeforth Stadium for construction, VDOT and JMU will be holding off of repaving until stadium construction is completed, so that the new pavement is not ruined. Estimated timeline 2 years.

Mr. Eschelman described that P-Lot along Bluestone Drive was also explored as an opportunity for a shared use path/bicycle trail. However, 69 parking spaces would be lost. Additionally, there are dam and flooding issues to be considered where Newman Lake turns into a stream and flows beneath the roadway near the intersection with Port Republic Rd. Mr. Eschelman is exploring wooden footbridge designs.

The closure of inner campus would also impact how bicycle and pedestrian facilities are planned and developed. Mr. Eschelman noted that the Grace Street corridor would be a good opportunity for bicycles, as well as the Mason Street corridor and that coordination with the City would be needed. Ms.

Dang noted that the City was waiting on JMU's plans for traffic circulation around the "old" Rockingham Memorial Hospital site which JMU will be acquiring, and that further discussion was needed for improvements around intersections in the area.

JMU will be placing bicycle racks inside its parking decks on a trial basis. The bicycle racks will be placed in areas that are empty and not utilized as parking spaces (generally to provide good sight distance inside the decks). These parking decks would provide covered parking opportunities.

There was some discussion about the Duke Dog Tunnel, which is 10 ft. wide and is currently utilized by bicycles and pedestrians. There was also discussion about the Arboretum Trail which JMU currently has no plans to pave its portion. Committee members generally agreed that the Arboretum Trail was being heavily used by bicycles and pedestrians, but no official counts have been conducted by anyone.

Several committee members asked who they might contact at JMU to encourage and to help with bicycle and pedestrian planning.

Forthcoming will be the contact list for members of JMU's Institute for Stewardship of the Natural World's Campus Accessibility Committee. This committee is chaired by Mr. Mack Moore.

9. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

The 95% draft Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan is available for download at www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped. Everyone is encouraged to review the Plan and to submit Final Comments, if any, to Ms. Thanh Dang by Sunday February 28, 2010.

The Plan will be presented to City Planning Commission in May 2010 and to City Council in June 2010. Committee members and citizens are encouraged to attend these meetings for public comment.

Ms. Dang thanked everyone who was involved in developing this Plan.

10. Other Matters

- a. **League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly Community Application** – Ms. Dang, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Thomas Jenkins have been working on an application for the Bicycle Friendly Community Award. Davis, CA is an example of a community with the highest designation of Platinum. There are four award levels: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze. Currently, Virginia's Bicycle Friendly Communities include Alexandria (Bronze), Arlington (Silver), and Charlottesville (Bronze).

The BCF application audits the City of Harrisonburg's and the community's efforts on Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation & Planning. Benefits of the program include recognition, promotion, bench marking, and technical help from the League.

This application will be presented to City Council at the February 9, 2010 meeting. The application is due February 19, 2010. A draft of the application was emailed to

committee members and the available online at www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped. Committee members are encouraged to review the application and let Ms. Dang know if additions or changes should be made. thanhd@harrisonburgva.gov. *Update February 18, 2010: The application was submitted on February 16, 2010.*

- b. **Comprehensive Plan Public Input starts ~ March 2010** - Mr. Chenault shared that the Planning Commission and city staff has been working on revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, which was last updated in 2004. The Planning Commission will finalize the Public Input methods and schedule soon and may start as early as March 2010.
- c. **New Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) 2009-2010 edition**, <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/> - This is the manual that provides guidelines for all roadway markings, signs, etc. across the nation. The manual is available in both PDF and html format online.
- d. **Upcoming Events:**
 - i. **May is Bike to Work Month** – Ms. Mack noted that planning for Bike to Work month is just starting and beginning stages of planning. If anyone is interested in helping to brainstorm, be a coordinator/event planner, to donate, or to volunteer in any way please contact Ms. Lara Mack at lcmack4286@gmail.com. A summary of ideas from the group’s first meeting is attached. Additional ideas welcome.
 - ii. **April 24 – Tour of Virginia**
 - iii. **April 17 through April 25 – Earth Week.** This year Earth Week events in Harrisonburg will be organized by Climate Action Alliance of the Valley and other partner organizations. The first planning/brainstorming meeting will be on February 4. *Update February 18, 2010: CAAV in collaboration with the Sierra Club, Friends of Blacks Run Greenway, JMU Earth Club, EMU Earth keepers Club, The City of Harrisonburg, New Community Project, Harrisonburg High School, Bridgewater College, etc. are planning Earthweek events between April 17-April 24. The next planning meeting will be on February 25, 2010. Any one or any group interested in volunteering should contact Page Shields, page60@comcast.net.*
 - iv. **June 25-30 – BikeVirginia.** An annual event hosted by BikeWalk Virginia, <http://www.bikevirginia.org/>. The 5-day ride will start in Staunton and between 2,000 to 3,000 riders will spend June 28, 29, 30 in Harrisonburg before returning to Staunton. Eastern Mennonite University will be hosting “tent city” where riders stay overnight.

BikeVirginia coordinators have been working with the Tourism Department on entertainment activities. Any local organization interested in displaying at “tent city” or interested in volunteering to help with the event should contact Mr. Shane Cusick at scusick@bikewalkvirginia.org.

BikeVirginia coordinators will be coordinating routes with VDOT, Sherriff’s Department, and Harrisonburg Police.

- e. **Funding** - Mr. Williams reminded the committee that funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities continues to be an issue. There are two parts to funding: initial funding needed for the construction of new infrastructure and funding needed for on-going maintenance.

The City has done relatively well with grant applications to fund the construction of new facilities, and the City Council has appropriated between \$30,000 to \$40,000 each year towards each of the bicycle and pedestrian facility line items.

However, the City receives a fixed amount of State dollars for maintenance of the roadway, but receives no maintenance dollars from the State for maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Citizens are encouraged to work with legislatures and to help develop solutions to fund long-term maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

11. Next Meetings

- a. Plan Advisory Committee – TBD if needed
- b. Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee –(quarterly meetings) May 3, 2010 @ 5:30pm

12. Meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

From: Lara Mack [mailto:lcmack4286@gmail.com]

Sent: Sun 2/7/2010 9:16 AM

To: Ben Wyse; Daniel Layman; frances miller; Ramiro; Soula Pefkaros; Thanh Dang; Thomas Jenkins; Tim Godshall; Tom Benevento; Zack Evans

Cc: paul johnston; lawrence.kyle.d@gmail.com; kurt.rosenberger@gmail.com

Subject: BIKE MONTH Meeting Notes

Hey all,

So for those of you who don't know about our current efforts yet, some of us bicycle advocate-types are planning a month's worth of events to celebrate bicycles, bicycles as transportation, and bicycle advocacy. This will be in May, to parallel the League of American Bicyclists bike month and we also plan on doing some sort of event on Bike to Work Day (May 21st).

This is how it is going to go: we have a *multitude* of events that we would like to put on for May, but we can only have as many events as there is energy and capacity for and we are the only ones that can really determine that. So, In the minutes of our last meeting I have all the proposed events/activities listed with a short description. You sign up for whichever one you believe you can and WANT to make happen for May. I'll be working with all of you to help coordinate and fit it all into the month properly.

Here goes:

- **Ride of Silence** - *Ben Wyse*. Ben will check in with the SVBC crowd to see if this happens in May. An easy event to plug in with the rest of the month and also really important.
- **Bike to Work Day** - *Tim Godshall*. May 21st. This one has the potential to be crazy awesome and also take a bit of extra planning. Possible ideas: plan safe routes for folks that decide to bike to work, provide bike mentors to ride with them to work, some sort of incentive for all those that ride (free coffee when they arrive?).
- **Mural on Liberty St:** *Frances, Ramiro*. The wind/brass music shop on Liberty downtown has a big beautiful gray wall that is just waitin' to be painted and become a face to support community, bike, etc. And it just so happens the owners of the shop would love for us to put a mural on the side of their building. The hope is to be working on this and unveil it during May during the next event...
- **Hoedown Fundraiser!!!** *Frances*. We have some amazing musicians in the area and not enough opportunities to dance. The idea, have admission (folks that ride to the howdown get a discount!) and folks can dance the night away. Also great, the perfect spot for the dance is where the mural is. In the parking lot between the shop and Liberty Park.
- **Bike Parade:** Could be a great Kick off event during May's "1st Fridays" downtown (May 7th). The idea is to make this a big fun one (may require some work with the city??). Have cyclists pulling musicians, bike floats? mascots? Costumes. the whole bit! Very celebratory
- **Family Bike Ride:** I believe Tom and Ben have done some brainstorming on this before. May would be a great month to initially incorporate this ride in with the rest of SVBCs... make it a regular thing! The idea is that this will be safe and fun for families with kids riding or in trailers. Maybe have a couple of different loops ending/starting at the Farmer's Market or a playground or park?
- **Alley Cat:** Much loved and very missed. This scavenger hunt would be a great fun event for May.

- **Bike Decorating Display:** Tom has seen this one in other towns before. Folks decorate some bikes and put them in store fronts. We can have a contest for the most flamboyant and fun bike. This may also require a bit more coordination to see what business owners would be willing (and would have enough space) to have bikes in their shops.
- **Bike Safety/Etiquette :** Maybe have a couple of these courses available at different locations throughout the month.
- **Court Square Movie Night/Davis Presentation/Key Note Speaker:** We could do one or all of these things in May. BUT we are certain that we have court square for one event because of the cancellation of "American Flyer" this weekend.

- just some thoughts... does anyone know if a good key note speaker that would pull a crowd?

We also plan on plugging on the usual SVBC rides during this month. Other tasks I could use folks help on is overall PR for the month (flier making, press releases, etc).

Sorry that was such a long email. PLEASE get back to me to let you know what you would like to help with and how.

Thank you thank you!

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Lara Mack

703.554.4770

www.onemilechallenge.org

www.littlegrillcollective.com

www.mountainjustice.org